



WASHINGTON POTATOES

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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PROCESSING POTATOES

Processors in Washington and Oregon (excluding Malheur County) used 30,340 thousand cwt of raw potatoes to December 1, 2005, 1,965 thousand cwt less than the 32,305 thousand cwt processed during the same period last year and 2,330 thousand cwt less than the 32,670 thousand cwt processed during the same time frame two years ago. Processing to December 1, 2005 in Washington and Oregon (excluding Malheur County) accounted for 26.2 percent of the 2005 production. Processing in the nine processing states totaled 65,925 thousand cwt of raw potatoes to December 1, 2005, 6.7 percent below the same period last year. Dehydrating usage in the nine processing states, excluding starch and flour, accounted for 12,200 thousand cwt of raw potatoes, 16.0 percent less than 2004.

FALL POTATOES USED FOR PROCESSING,^{1/} SELECTED STATES, 2004 & 2005

STATE	STORAGE SEASON	TO OCT 1	TO NOV 1	TO DEC 1	TO JAN 1	TO FEB 1	TO MAR 1	TO APR 1	TO MAY 1	TO JUN 1	ENTIRE SEASON
1,000 Cwt											
Idaho & Malheur Co., Ore.	2004-05	10,470	17,390	24,360	30,840	36,820	44,610	51,000	58,090	65,800	84,600
	2005-06	8,370	15,740	22,590							
Maine 2/	2004-05			1,540	1,970	2,600	3,135	3,700	4,340	4,910	6,590
	2005-06			1,280							
Wash. & Other Area, Ore.	2004-05	17,970	24,990	32,305	38,130	43,570	50,730	57,140	63,855	71,355	78,680
	2005-06	16,620	23,645	30,340							
Other States 3/	2004-05			12,490	15,000	17,965	20,910	24,150	27,480	30,945	41,175
	2005-06			11,715							
TOTAL	2004-05			70,695	85,940	100,955	119,385	135,990	153,765	173,010	211,045
	2005-06			65,925							
Dehydrated 4/	2004-05			14,525	18,540	21,875	25,970	30,020	33,685	38,505	47,805
	2005-06			12,200							

1/ Total quantity received and used for processing regardless of the State in which the potatoes were produced. Amount excludes quantities used for potato chips in ME, MI, and WI.

2/ Includes Maine grown potatoes only.

3/ CO, MN, NV, ND, and WI.

4/ Dehydrated products except starch and flour. Included in above totals. Includes CO, ID, NV, ND, OR, WA, and WI.

POTATO STOCKS

Potatoes stored in Washington on December 1, 2005 were estimated at 52,000 thousand cwt, 2,000 thousand cwt more than the 50,000 thousand cwt in storage on December 1, 2004. Disappearance of the State's crop was 43,480 thousand cwt as of December 1, 2005, compared with 43,810 thousand cwt in 2004.

December Potato Stocks Down 6 Percent from Last Year

The 13 major potato States held 253 million cwt of potatoes in storage December 1, 2005, down 6 percent from last year and 5 percent below December 1, 2003, for comparable States. Ohio and Pennsylvania were dropped from the potato stocks program starting with the 2005 storage season. Potatoes in storage account for 68 percent of the 2005 fall storage States' production, 1 percentage point above last year. Stocks by type were 3 percent red, 12 percent round white, 2 percent long white (Shepody), and 83 percent russets, with fewer long whites and more round whites and russets than a year ago for comparable States.

Western States held 176 million cwt of potatoes in storage on December 1, down 5 percent from last year and 1 percent below 2 years ago. Idaho's potato stocks are down 10 percent from last year, Colorado's potato sheds stored 9 percent less than in 2004, stocks in Montana are 6 percent below last season, and California's stocks decreased 47 percent from last year. Oregon's potato stocks are up 12 percent from last year and Washington's potato sheds stored 4 percent more than last season.

Central States accounted for 61.2 million cwt of potato stocks on December 1, down 9 percent from last year and 14 percent below 2 years ago for comparable States. Wisconsin's potato stocks are down 2 percent from last year, North Dakota's potato sheds are 29 percent below last season, and Nebraska's stocks decreased 10 percent from December 1, 2004. Michigan and Minnesota's potato sheds both stored 4 percent more than last year.

Eastern States stored 16.0 million cwt of potatoes on December 1, down 8 percent from last year and 1 percent below 2 years ago for comparable States. Maine's potato sheds hold 14 percent less than last year, while New York's potato stocks increased 35 percent from a year ago.

FALL POTATOES: PRODUCTION & STOCKS, WASHINGTON & 15 FALL STATES, 2000-2005

CROP YEAR	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS						
		DEC 1	FOLLOWING YEAR					
			JAN 1	FEB 1	MAR 1	APR 1	MAY 1	JUN 1
WASHINGTON			1,000 Cwt.					
2000	105,000	59,000	52,000	44,500	37,500	29,500	21,500	13,000
2001	94,400	53,000	46,000	40,000	32,500	25,000	18,000	10,000
2002	92,340	50,000	43,500	38,500	30,500	23,000	16,500	9,000
2003	93,150	51,000	44,000	38,000	29,500	21,500	15,000	7,000
2004	93,810	50,000	43,000	36,500	29,000	22,000	15,500	8,000
2005	95,480	52,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 STATES 1/								
2000	458,827	310,300	275,270	234,260	197,670	153,520	109,160	61,270
2001	387,033	258,750	224,680	192,090	158,590	119,950	81,200	42,990
2002	407,085	264,485	231,490	199,020	165,110	125,770	83,040	45,880
2003	403,181	267,900	233,590	200,230	166,280	126,110	85,000	46,020
2004	403,587	271,100	236,700	203,490	168,020	128,900	88,550	51,700
2005	373,696	253,400	-	-	-	-	-	-

1/ See table below for listing of 15 states.

PRODUCTION AND TOTAL STOCKS OF FALL POTATOES HELD BY GROWERS, PROCESSORS AND LOCAL DEALERS ON DECEMBER 1, 2004 AND DECEMBER 1, 2005 1/

STATE	CROP OF 2004			CROP OF 2005		
	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS DECEMBER 1, 2004	DECEMBER 1 STOCKS AS % OF PRODUCTION	PRODUCTION	TOTAL STOCKS DECEMBER 1, 2005	DECEMBER 1 STOCKS AS % OF PRODUCTION
	1,000 Cwt		Percent	1,000 Cwt		Percent
California	3,648	3,000	82	3,240	1,600	49
Colorado	23,791	18,000	76	22,292	16,300	73
Idaho	131,970	93,500	71	116,975	84,000	72
Maine	19,065	15,000	79	15,820	12,900	82
Michigan	13,650	8,000	59	13,920	8,300	60
Minnesota	18,920	13,000	69	17,630	13,500	77
Montana	3,551	3,500	99	3,434	3,300	96
Nebraska	9,288	6,300	68	8,106	5,700	70
New York	5,184	2,300	44	5,226	3,100	59
N. Dakota	26,765	19,600	73	20,500	14,000	68
Ohio 2/	1,080	200	19			
Oregon	19,775	17,000	86	22,023	19,000	86
Pennsylvania 2/	2,640	1,600	61			
Washington	93,810	50,000	53	95,480	52,000	54
Wisconsin	30,450	20,100	66	29,050	19,700	68
15 STATES TOTAL 3/	403,587	271,100	67	373,696	253,400	68

1/ Stocks include processor holdings and most of the seed to plant following year's crop. Seed usage for all seasons in 2005 totaled 24.7 million cwt.

2/ Stock estimates discontinued in 2005. 3/ Thirteen storage states starting in 2005.

FALL POTATOES - PRODUCTION FORECAST - DECEMBER 1, 2005

States	Area Harvested		Yield Per Acre		Production		
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
	1,000 Acres		Cwt		1,000 Cwt		
WINTER 1/	18.5	19.8	260	247	4,027	4,818	4,892
SPRING 1/	72.2	64.4	314	281	24,433	22,663	18,099
SUMMER 1/	53.9	48.3	340	334	18,766	18,307	16,123
FALL:							
California	7.6	7.2	480	450	3,528	3,648	3,240
Colorado	64.3	57.9	370	385	23,652	23,791	22,292
Idaho, All	353.0	323.0	374	362	123,180	131,970	116,975
10 SW Counties	25.0	21.0	490	465	11,625	12,250	9,765
Other Areas	328.0	302.0	365	355	111,555	119,720	107,210
Indiana 2/	3.2		350		925	1,120	
Maine	61.5	56.5	310	280	17,030	19,065	15,820
Massachusetts	2.5	2.4	320	260	716	800	624
Michigan	42.0	43.5	325	320	15,015	13,650	13,920
Minnesota	44.0	43.0	430	410	22,330	18,920	17,630
Montana	10.6	10.9	335	315	3,339	3,551	3,434
Nebraska	21.6	19.3	430	420	9,744	9,288	8,106
Nevada	6.7	5.5	430	425	3,320	2,881	2,338
New Mexico 3/	4.0	4.8	430	440	1,600	1,720	2,112
New York	19.2	20.1	270	260	6,510	5,184	5,226
North Dakota	101.0	82.0	265	250	27,440	26,765	20,500
Ohio	3.6	3.6	300	250	1,097	1,080	900
Oregon, All	37.0	37.1	534	594	20,991	19,775	22,023
Malheur County	5.2	3.8	470	450	2,407	2,444	1,710
Other Areas	31.8	33.3	545	610	18,584	17,331	20,313
Pennsylvania	11.0	11.0	240	250	3,375	2,640	2,750
Rhode Island	0.5	0.5	290	210	171	145	105
South Dakota 4/	-	-	-	-	340	-	-
Utah 4/	-	-	-	-	335	-	-
Washington	159.0	154.0	590	620	93,150	93,810	95,480
Wisconsin	70.0	70.0	435	415	32,800	30,450	29,050
TOTAL FALL	1,022.3	952.3	401	402	410,588	410,253	382,525
UNITED STATES	1,166.9	1,084.8	391	389	457,814	456,041	421,639

1/ Estimates for current year carried forward from an earlier forecast.

2/ Estimates discontinued in 2005.

3/ Summer potatoes combined with fall potatoes in 2005.

4/ Estimates discontinued in 2004.

Fall Potato Production Virtually Unchanged from November

Production of fall potatoes for 2005 is forecast at 383 million cwt, virtually unchanged from last month but down 7 percent from last year for comparable States. Indiana was dropped from the program in 2005. Area harvested, at 952,300 acres, is up less than 1 percent from November but 7 percent below last year. The average yield is forecast at a record high 402 cwt per acre, unchanged from last month but 1 cwt above the previous record set last year.

Western States production is forecast at 268 million cwt, up less than 1 percent from the November forecast but down 5 percent from last year. Acreage harvested, at 600,400 acres, decreased 7 percent from last year but the average yield of 446 cwt per acre is up 8 cwt from 2004. Growing conditions through out the Western States were generally favorable. Idaho's potato production, forecast at 117 million cwt, is 11 percent below last year and the lowest since 1989. Planted and harvested acres in Idaho are the lowest since 1986. Yield in Washington, is forecast at 620 cwt, 30 cwt above last year. If realized this will be a record high yield, exceeding the previous record established in 2000 by 20 cwt. Production, at 95.5 million cwt, is 2 percent above last year. Colorado's production is expected to decrease 6 percent from 2004 but yields are up 15 cwt per acre. A long growing season and adequate irrigation water allowed potatoes to size larger. Oregon's production is forecast to be up 11 percent due to the record high yield of 594 cwt per acre, 51 cwt above the previous record high established in 2000. In Montana, production is expected to be down 3 percent but the crop quality is reported to be good. In California, production is forecast to be down 11 percent. Cool weather in late spring and early summer led to smaller potatoes and lower yields. Nevada growers expect a 19 percent decrease in production. New Mexico's production is expected to be up 23 percent from last year. This increase is due to the inclusion of summer potatoes into New Mexico's fall potato forecast in 2005. All potato production for New Mexico is forecast up 3 percent.

Central States production is forecast at 90.1 million cwt, down less than 1 percent from the November forecast and 10 percent below last year for comparable States. Harvested area, estimated at 261,400 acres, is up less than 1 percent from November but 7 percent below a year ago for comparable States. Average yields, at 345 cwt per acre, are down 1 cwt from last month and 10 cwt below a year ago. Wisconsin growers are expecting production to decrease 5 percent from last year. This decrease is due to fewer potatoes per hill resulting in a 20 cwt per acre drop in yield. North Dakota's production is forecast to be down 23 percent due in part to a 19 percent decrease in harvested acres. Flooding in the major potato producing region caused growers to abandon a larger amount of acres than normal. Yields are also expected to be down from last year. Minnesota production is forecast to be 7 percent below last year. In Nebraska, production is expected to be down 13 percent. Ohio production is expected to be 17 percent below last year due to a 50 cwt per acre decrease in yield. Michigan is the only State in the Central Region where production is expected to increase, 2 percent above last year. Good weather throughout the growing season provided excellent planting and growing conditions. Decent fall weather allowed harvest to progress at a normal pace and led to good storage conditions.

Eastern States production is forecast at 24.5 million cwt, virtually unchanged from the November forecast but down 12 percent from last year. Area for harvest totaled 90,500 acres, unchanged from last month but 4 percent below last year. Average yield, at 271 cwt per acre, is unchanged from November but 23 cwt below last season. Drought conditions during the summer in Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island reduced yields. A 17 percent decrease in production from last year is expected in Maine, 22 percent in Massachusetts, and 28 percent for Rhode Island. New York growers expect a 1 percent increase in production and a 4 percent increase is expected in Pennsylvania from the previous season.

RELIABILITY OF DECEMBER 1 STOCKS ESTIMATES

To assist users in evaluating the reliability of the December 1 stocks estimate, the "Root Mean Square Error," a statistical measure based on past performance, is computed. The deviation between the December 1 stocks estimate and the final estimate is expressed as a percentage of the final estimate. The average of squared percentage deviations for the latest 20-year period is computed. The square root of the average becomes statistically the "Root Mean Square Error." Probability statements can be made concerning expected differences in the current estimate relative to the final end-of-season estimate, assuming that factors affecting this year's estimate are not different from those influencing recent years.

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